

## **TRANSPORTATION - CANCELLATION OF BUS ROUTES DUE TO WEATHER/ROAD CONDITIONS**

### **Background**

It is recognized that parents/guardians have the first decision as to whether or not to send their student(s) to school on days when weather conditions are a factor.

On occasion, it may be unwise to operate bus routes due to the risks involved in transporting students as a result of weather/road conditions.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Setting and Reviewing the Process**

The bus drivers and the School Administrator(s) at each school must, early in each school year, meet to establish a suitable procedure for checking and reporting conditions and reaching a collective decision relative to the wisdom of operating school buses when weather/road conditions would create an unnecessary risk for the safe transport of students.

#### **2. Making the Decision**

In the case of extreme weather/unsafe road conditions, the bus drivers are to communicate their assessment of the situation to the School Administrator(s). The School Administrator(s) and bus drivers shall reach a collective decision as to whether all bus routes serving a school, specific routes, and/or portions of specific routes will not operate for that day only.

##### **2.1 Temperature**

- 2.1.1 Bus Routes will be cancelled when the air temperature reaches -40 degrees Celsius;
- 2.1.2 Bus Routes will be cancelled when the air temperature combined with wind chill reaches -40 degrees Celsius.
- 2.1.3 Air temperature and wind chill will be determined by accessing [www.theweathernetwork.com](http://www.theweathernetwork.com) and viewing the information for the town/village in which the school is located. This website displays temperature and wind chill for each area in the Division.
- 2.1.4 The information acquired above shall be obtained just prior to the bus route, not the night before.

##### **2.2 Fog**

When considering whether or not a bus route should be cancelled due to fog, the bus driver shall make an effort to contact some parents/guardians at various locations on their route to determine the severity of the fog and whether it is widespread or localized. Bus drivers have the option to advise parents/guardians that they will try to run at a later time (e.g., 10:00 a.m.) since fog generally lifts as the sun rises. Once a morning route

has been cancelled due to fog, and if conditions are not foggy for the afternoon route, bus drivers should make the afternoon run to deliver students home.

### 2.3 Other Weather Issues

When a morning bus route has been cancelled due to any other weather related issue such as a winter storm or poor road conditions, bus drivers are not expected or required to run their afternoon route. Parents/guardians who have delivered their student(s) to school are expected to pick them up at dismissal.

## 3. Notification – Cancelling All Routes

When a decision has been made between bus drivers and the School Administrator(s) to cancel all routes serving a particular school:

- 3.1 The School Administrator(s) will call the Transportation office after hours emergency line for staff / bus drivers.
- 3.2 Transportation personnel will initiate the automatic phone fan-out to parents/guardians and update the website.
- 3.3 In some circumstances, bus drivers will be required to initiate their emergency phone fan-out.
- 3.4 Parents/guardians can view route cancellations at [www.brsd.ab.ca](http://www.brsd.ab.ca)

## 4. Notification – Cancelling an Individual Route

When a bus driver determines it is necessary to cancel all or a portion of their individual bus route, once safe to do so, the bus driver will make every effort to notify the following in order:

- 4.1 School Administrator(s).
- 4.2 Transportation office after hours emergency line for staff / bus drivers.  
(Transportation personnel will update the website, initiate the automatic phone fan-out to parents/guardians and/or request the bus driver to conduct a phone fan-out to parents/guardians).
- 4.3 Parents/guardians can view route cancellations at [www.brsd.ab.ca](http://www.brsd.ab.ca)

## 5. Sending Buses Home Early During the School Day

In the case of the development of extreme weather/unsafe road conditions during the school day, the bus drivers are to communicate their assessment of the situation to the School Administrator(s). The School Administrator(s) and the bus drivers shall reach a decision as to whether or not bused students will be sent home early.

- 5.1 The School Administrator(s) shall notify transportation personnel of the decision to send buses home early.
- 5.2 The School Administrator(s) will ensure all bus drivers are notified.
- 5.3 It is the responsibility of the School Administrator(s) to set up a telephone fan-out plan to be implemented during such emergencies. Furthermore, students shall not leave the school before a safe place for the student is established and that this information is communicated to the parents/emergency contact.
- 5.4 Transportation personnel will update the website that buses are running early.
- 5.5 Parents/guardians can view route cancellations at [www.brsd.ab.ca](http://www.brsd.ab.ca)

## **6. Extreme Conditions - Decisions made by Division Office**

- 6.1 Only in instances of unusually extreme conditions, or in a general system-wide emergency, will personnel at the Division Office make an announcement covering the cancellation of bus routes affecting a school, some schools, or all schools in the system.
- 6.2 In such cases, transportation personnel shall:
  - 6.2.1 Initiate the automatic phone fan-out to parents/guardians.
  - 6.2.2 Update the website for parents/guardians to view route cancellations at *www.brsd.ab.ca*
  - 6.2.3 Contact each affected School Administrator(s) via telephone as soon as possible after such a decision is rendered.

Reference: Section 57, 60, 61, 113, School Act  
Employment Standards Act

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